

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic England Farm

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 4619 SE 37th St.

N/A not for publication

city, town Topeka

☒ vicinity of ~~Congressional District~~

state Kansas

code 20

county Shawnee

code 177

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Alice and Michael Crossen

street & number 4619 SE 37th St.

city, town Topeka

N/A vicinity of

state Kansas

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Shawnee County Courthouse

city, town Topeka

state Kansas 66603

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date N/A

☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A

state

7. Description

Condition

☒ excellent

☐ good

☐ fair

☐ deteriorated

☐ ruins

☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered

☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved

date

N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The England Farm is situated on 37th Street just southeast of Topeka. The original farm consisted of 160 acres. The nominated property consists only of the five acres on which stand the house, barn, and other outbuildings. This acreage is owned by Alice England Cnossen and her husband Mike Cnossen. The other 155 acres of the original farm are owned by J. Boyd England, father of Alice, and descendant of Joseph England who purchased the land in 1872. Having been used until recently for farming operations, the buildings on the nominated five acres have retained their integrity as a farm complex. They present a remarkably complete picture of a farm that has evolved over the last century, a picture that is rapidly disappearing around Topeka as the city spreads into outlying areas.

The house, built in 1874, is a five-bay, single-pile, two story stone farmhouse with a full attic and basement. The stone was quarried from the northeast corner of the farm. Stone from that quarry was also used to build the barn, a fire break, and other buildings in the area, including a school and a church. The house has a gently sloping gable roof which runs east and west. To the rear of the house is a single story ell, also built of stone. Directly behind that is a frame structure which is thought to have been built by Joseph England when he arrived. There is one small interior chimney at the west gable end of the main part of the house, and another non-functioning exterior chimney between the stone ell and the frame portion of the house. The house was built to accomodate stoves rather than fireplaces so there are no large chimneys.

The rough-cut limestone of which the house is built was laid in regular courses. The sills and lintels of the front door and of all the windows in the stone part of the house are dressed limestone. A simply molded wooden box cornice finishes the roof-line.

The front door, located in the center of the north facade, opened originally into a stair hall. To the left of the stairs was a narrow corridor which led back to the kitchen. The room to the left of the front door functioned as a bedroom and to the right of the door was the parlor. Today, the wall between the old bedroom and corridor has been removed and this room serves as a living room. The old parlor is used as a bedroom. The stairway itself is unchanged. The kitchen is located in what is thought to be the original frame cabin. The dining room and "little bedroom" occupy the single-story ell. The north part of this bedroom was originally a pantry.

Upstairs, a small bedroom has been converted to a bathroom and storage space. There are two more larger bedrooms on the north wall. The one on the west still has the old two over two sash windows, but the other windows upstairs have been changed to one over one panes. Downstairs, the windows in the main part of the house are two over one.

The major outbuilding on the property is the two-and-one-half story stone barn. The main portion of the barn, built around 1874, measures about 38 feet by 60 feet with the ridge running east-west. An addition measuring about 42 feet by 20 feet was built around 1910 on the southwest corner of the barn. The original barn is built entirely of coursed rubble stone. The later addition has a coursed rubble stone ground floor and a frame upper portion.

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The old barn has large arched doorways on the north and south sides at either end of the drivethrough. A gentle slope leads up to the north entrance. All of the original beams of the old barn are hand-hewn walnut. The wood framework was joined by pegs and dowels. The sag in the roof, according to former owner J. B. England, was created when a windstorm lifted the south half of the roof and caused it to slide down over the wall somewhat. A small concrete room that served as a harness room was added on the west wall. A shed roof was attached at the second story level on the east side, presumably as additional storage space for equipment.

The c. 1910 addition has an interesting support system. The beams are whole unshaved logs. The center posts of two of the beams are crotched tree limbs. The other posts are unfinished logs. The long east side is entirely open on the ground floor.

The old part of the barn was remodeled by J. B. England in 1961 or 1962. Before that time the area west of the drivethrough in the barn held individual stalls for six work horses and one pony. Immediately east of the drivethrough was a row of stanchions for milking cows. Extending into the central floor was a trough from which the cows fed. About 18 feet east of this first row of stanchions was a shorter row of stanchions. A pen about eight feet square for baby calves was located to the north. The hay chute used for feeding hay from the haymow to the east row of cows is still there.

The barn was designed to hold loose hay, alfalfa and prairie. The wagons loaded with loose hay were pulled into the drivethrough and the hay pulled up to the haymow with a large hay fork. Balers did not exist when the barn was built. The much heavier bales of hay have caused a certain amount of stress on the structural members.

The floor of the barn was dirt except for the concrete gutters behind each row of cows. The J. B. Englands installed concrete floors throughout the barn in the early 1960's.

A major addition to the barn was the tile block silo, built around 1917.

Also included in the farm-yard complex are a wind mill and mill house (now known as the granery), a structure known as the ice house, a frame shed with a wash house attached to it, and another frame shed currently used for storage and as a work-shop. The windmill, although no longer functional, is a rare example of a mill being used solely for grinding feed and not for pumping water. The millhouse, which stands directly to the west of the wind mill is a two-story structure. The lower story is stone and the upper is frame sheathed with vertical boards. The southern portion of the frame story is, according

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to family history, the room that Joseph England built at the north end of the original frame cabin. It was removed when the stone house was built and reused here. This explanation may account for the difference in the width of the sheathing boards at the northern and southern ends.

The ice house is a frame structure raised off the ground on stone foundation walls that run only under the north and south walls, creating an open crawl space beneath the building. The ice stored in the ice house was cut on the pond which is south of the barn. It was packed in sawdust and the building was insulated with sawdust to assist in preserving the ice. The building was most recently used to store grain.

The frame outbuilding with the wash house on the back was built to store the hay loader, and for that reason is a very tall, rather narrow building. The wash house on the back is sheathed in shiplap siding and has a shed roof.

The last frame shed is one that was reputedly located near the new house that Josiah and Clara England built c. 1901. This house burned in 1912 and the Englands moved back to the old farmstead. It is believed that the shed was moved from its original location to its present location at that time.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1874, 1910, 1917 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The England Farm complex is a singularly well-preserved group of agricultural buildings. Having been used continuously for over 100 years as farm buildings, and still serving as shelter for many farm implements, the feeling of the rural farm life is still very strong in spite of the encroachment of housing developments upon neighboring farm lands. Most of the original 160 acres that the farm encompassed is intact, but only the five acres on which sit the house and barn and outbuildings are proposed for nomination to the National Register.

Joseph England and his wife Ellen came to Kansas with their children Belle and Josiah in the spring of 1870. A warranty deed dates the England's purchase of the northwest 1/4 of section 24, township 12, range 16 to January 19, 1872. They bought the property from Nathan Shadley and his wife Elizabeth who had owned the land since 1859. Joseph and Ellen may have built the frame cabin that now serves as the kitchen, or it may have been standing when they arrived on the farmstead. The 1874 datestone on the east end of the house is, in all likelihood, accurate. The Andreas 1883 History of Kansas stated that Joseph England had a "fine stone dwelling and large barn, and all conveniences for successful farming." One hundred acres of Joseph's land were in cultivation and 60 in meadow at that point. The Englands had apparently weathered the plagues of insects and the droughts of the mid-1870's fairly successfully. Joseph and Ellen had three more children while they lived in the house. In September, 1891, Joseph drowned when he lost consciousness and fell into the cistern.

At the time of Joseph's death an estate inventory was compiled and his property divided among his widow and children. Ellen lived in the house until 1904. Josiah, the oldest son, and his wife Clara lived in the house from 1895 to 1901, when they built a new house down the road. This house burned on Christmas Eve in 1912 and the family had to move back to the old stone farmhouse which had been used for sheep shearing and grain storage.

Josiah's and Clara's son, John Boyd(J.B.), and his wife Helene were the next owners of the farm. They resided in the old stone house and worked the surrounding land from 1936 until 1972. Their daughter Alice and her husband Michael Cnossen moved into the house in 1979 and are the current owners.

Throughout its history, the farm expanded and changed to suit the different needs of each generation of farmers. This is reflected in the buildings that are clustered in the farm yard.

The house started as a one or two room frame cabin and was quickly expanded to a two-story stone residence. Its broad, undecorated, horizontal front recalls farmhouse

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vernacular from as early as the turn of the nineteenth century and as far away as New England where, as William Pierson points out, the two-story horizontal block prevailed for farmhouse construction.

The original barn, situated east of the house with its ridge running parallel to that of the house, received two major additions before 1920. The first was a large two-story barn connected to the southwest corner of the barn, the second was the large tile block silo--a major investment and important addition to any expanding farm. The mill house and adjacent wind mill were built by Joseph. His youngest son, Jesse, had the duty of grinding corn and oats when the wind blew. As the needs of the farm grew, new outbuildings were built. Most of the structures that stand in the farm yard today were built by 1920 and have been modified over the years to accomodate new demands.

A thorough, analytical study of farm groups in northeast Kansas has yet to be done, and so the England farm cannot be viewed in that context. We do know that this is a very complete farm complex whose integrity has been maintained through continued use. It will play a valuable role when a study of Kansas farm complexes is undertaken.

THIS STATEMENT REFLECTS CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

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Andreas, A.T. ed. History of the State of Kansas. Chicago, 1883; p584.

England, J.B. Statements of November and December, 1891.

Estate Inventory, Oct. 2, 1891.

Topeka Daily Capital. Sept. 15, 1891.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Approx. 5 acres

Quadrangle name Richland

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	1	5
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2	7	5	6	4	1	0
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4	1	3	1	9	7	1	1	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification Five acres on which is situated homestead in N1/2 of NW1/4 of S24, T12S, R16E. Buildings occupy this much land.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nora Pat Small, Architectural Historian--Historic Preservation Department

organization Ks. State Historical Society date 3-30-82

street & number 120 West Tenth telephone 913 296-3251

city or town Topeka state Kansas 66612

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Executive Director, State Historic Preservation Officer

date March 29, 1982

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

STATE OF KANSAS
UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS
STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

6862 II SE
(GRANTVILLE)

